AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A position budgeting and control system for evaluating and controlling human resource budgets, comprising:

a central processing unit;

input/output means;

at least one data base containing human resource data relating to human resource objects; and

a commitment engine,

said commitment engine retrieving human resource ~~relevant~~ data from said at least one data base and evaluating a human resource budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time <u>based</u> on ~~the basis of~~ said retrieved <u>human resource</u> data, said commitment engine further storing ~~the~~ <u>a</u> result of said evaluation ~~and~~<u>,</u> monitoring said <u>human resource</u> budget during said predefined period of time<u>, and providing an automatic notification to a user based on said monitoring</u>.

2. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 1, wherein said commitment engine comprises an administrator module, an object collector module and a data collector module, said administrator module being connected to said object collector module and said data collector module, said administrator module administering data flow to and from said object and data collector modules, said object collector module retrieving objects from said at least one data base ~~means~~ and said

data collector means collecting data from said at least one data base and writing updated human resource data to said at least one data base.

3. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 2, said commitment engine further comprising a creator module for creating human resource budget control documents, an error handling module for handling errors and triggering workflows to overcome an error, and a transfer module for transferring human resource budget data to an exterior accountancy, said administrator module administering data flow to and from said creator, said error handling and said transfer modules.

4. (Original) The system according to claim 2, wherein said human resource data consists of position data and individual employee data.

5. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 2, wherein said commitment engine calculates an individual employee salary based on the basis of said retrieved human resource data.

6. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 5, wherein said commitment engine calculates said individual employee salary for said predefined period of time as an individual employee salary budget and monitors said individual employee salary budget during said period of time and provides an automatic notification to a user based on said monitoring.

7. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein said commitment engine combines several of said individual employee salary budgets into a department or cost center budget.

8. (Original) The system according to claim 7, wherein said commitment engine monitors said department or cost center budget during said period of time.

9. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 6, wherein said monitoring involves a comparison of said calculated <u>individual employee salary</u> budget with <u>one or more</u> actually effected salary payments.

10. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 8, wherein said monitoring involves a comparison of said calculated <u>individual employee salary</u> budget with <u>one or more</u> actually effected salary payments.

11. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 4, wherein said commitment engine calculates <u>one or more</u> position cost simulations for <u>one or more</u> employee positions <u>based</u> on ~~the basis of~~ said position data for said predefined period of time, ~~the~~ <u>a</u> sum of said position cost simulations being ~~the~~ <u>a</u> potential position budget for an employer entity or sub-entity for said predefined period of time.

12. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 4, wherein said commitment engine calculates <u>one or more</u> employee cost simulations for an existing employee <u>based</u> on ~~the a basis of~~ said individual employee data for said predefined period of time, ~~the~~ <u>a</u> sum of said employee cost simulations being ~~the~~ <u>an</u> actual employee budget for an employer entity or sub-entity for said predefined period of time.

13. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 11, wherein said commitment engine provides an indication for ~~a hiring decision regarding hiring of~~ <u>an employee position opening for</u> new personnel <u>based</u> on ~~the a basis of the~~ <u>a</u> difference between said potential position budget and ~~said~~ <u>an</u> actual employee budget.

14. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 12, wherein said commitment engine provides an indication for ~~a hiring decision regarding hiring of~~ <u>an</u>

employee position opening for new personnel based on ~~the basis of the~~ a difference

between ~~said~~ a potential position budget and said actual employee budget.

15. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 4, wherein said

commitment engine automatically recognizes changes to said human resource data that

are relevant to said human resource budget and automatically re-evaluates said human

resource budget.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for evaluating and controlling human

resource budgets, comprising:

retrieving human resource ~~relevant~~ data and evaluating a human resource

budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time based on ~~the~~

~~basis of~~ said retrieved human resource data[[,]]; and

storing and monitoring said human resource budget during said predefined

period of time.

17. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 16, further

comprising:

reserving ~~funds~~ an amount of money according to said evaluated human

resource data.

18. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 17, further

comprising:

continuously adapting said reserved ~~funds~~ amount of money by subtracting one

or more effected salary payments.

19. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 30, further

comprising:

performing, based on ~~the a basis of~~ a human resource budget preparation, ~~performing~~ a reservation step for a human resource position only, then performing a pre-commitment step for occupied and vacant human resource positions based only on ~~the a basis of~~ retrieved ~~specific~~ human resource position data, and then performing a commitment step for human resource objects based only on ~~the a basis of~~ retrieved ~~specific~~ human resource object data, and a subsequent adaptation of ~~the~~ one or more results of ~~the~~ said respective prior steps.

20. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 19, further comprising:

reserving ~~funds~~ an amount of money for said predefined period of time based on ~~the~~ said ~~basis of~~ results of said commitment step.

21. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 30, further comprising:

continuous~~ly~~ ~~adaptation~~ adapting of ~~the~~ said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource position data.

22. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 30, further comprising:

continuous~~ly~~ ~~adaptation~~ adapting of ~~the~~ said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource object data.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for evaluating and controlling human resource budgets embodied by a computer readable medium, ~~the~~ said computer program product comprising instructions to cause a processor of a computer to execute the following steps:

retrieving human resource ~~relevant~~ data and evaluating a human resource

budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time <u>based</u> on ~~the~~

~~basis of~~ said retrieved <u>human resource</u> data[[,]]<u>;</u> and

storing and monitoring said <u>human resource</u> budget during said predefined

period of time.

24. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> computer program product according to claim

23, further comprising instructions for:

reserving ~~funds~~ <u>an amount of money</u> according to said evaluated human

resource data.

25. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> computer program product according to claim

24, further comprising instructions for:

continuously adapting said reserved ~~funds~~ <u>amount of money</u> by subtracting <u>one</u>

<u>or more</u> effected salary payments.

26. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> computer program product according to claim

33, further comprising instructions for:

<u>performing, based</u> on ~~the a basis of~~ a <u>human resource</u> budget preparation,

~~performing~~ a reservation step for a human resource position only, then performing a

pre-commitment step for occupied and vacant human resource positions <u>based</u> only on

~~the basis of~~ retrieved ~~specific~~ <u>human resource</u> position data, and then performing a

commitment step for human resource objects <u>based</u> only on ~~the basis of~~ retrieved

~~specific~~ <u>human resource</u> object data, and <u>a</u> subsequent adaptation of ~~the~~ <u>one or more</u>

results of ~~the~~ <u>said</u> respective prior steps.

27. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The computer program product according to claim 26, further comprising instructions for:

reserving funds for said predefined period of time based on ~~the basis of~~ said commitment step.

28. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The computer program product according to claim 32, further comprising instructions for:

continuous~~ly~~ ~~adaptation~~ adapting of ~~the~~ said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource position data.

29. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The computer program product according to claim 32, further comprising instructions for:

continuously adapting ~~the~~ said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource object data.

30. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein said human resource data includes human resource position data and human resource object data.

31. (New) The method according to claim 16, further comprising:

providing an automatic notification to a user based on said monitoring.

32. (New) The method according to claim 23, wherein said human resource data includes human resource position data and human resource object data.

33. (New) The method according to claim 23, further comprising:

providing an automatic notification to a user based on said monitoring.